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SUBJECT: THE US AND IRAN; THE US VOTE ON AN IDB LOAN FOR ARGENTINA;  
2007 WORLD BANK DOING BUSINESS REPORT; MEXICAN PRESIDENT-ELECT  
CALDERON; US DEMOCRATS AND CHAVEZ; ARGENTINE DRUG TRAFFICKING;  
09/06/06; BUENOS AIRES

## 1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Local international stories include US President Bush's statements about Iran; the US allegedly opposing the approval of an IDB loan for Argentina; the World Bank's 2007 Doing Business Report on Argentina; Mexican President-elect Felipe Calderon; US Democrats' statement that Venezuelan President Chavez does not pose a threat to US national security; and Argentina's status in terms of drug trafficking.

## 2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "As an election weapon, Bush now targets Iran"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," writes (09/06) "Only nine weeks away from legislative elections, the White House started yesterday a new media campaign aimed at sustaining that its 'global war on terrorism' is successful, that Al Qaeda is now weakened and, therefore, that Americans should vote for Republicans supporting the Bush administration.

"Controversial as it sounds, the latest election strategy has emerged from an updated version of the -'National Strategy to fight Terrorism,' which was released yesterday by US President George W. Bush's staff. It charges Iran with being a potential distributor of WMD among terrorists.

"Bush said 'just like Al Qaeda and Sunni extremists, the Iranian regime has clear purposes - it wants to remove the US from the region, destroy Israel and prevail in the Middle East.'

"Iran and its controversial nuclear development plan seem now the White House's top foreign policy priorities, well beyond the situation in Iraq or Afghanistan, North Korean missile threats, or the September 11 attacks."

- "According to Bush, the Iranian president is a 'tyrant'"

Leading "Clarín" reports (09/06) "US President George W. Bush said his Iranian counterpart, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is a 'tyrant' and he compared Tehran leaders with Al Qaeda terrorists, and that they should be prevented from manufacturing nuclear weapons.

"US President Bush said 'the US will not subject itself to tyrants,' and 'the free nations of the world will not let Iran develop nuclear weapons.'

"Bush accused Iran of having funded Hezbollah's Shiite militia

during the war in Lebanon as well as other groups 'to indirectly attack the US and Israel.'"

- "The US is again against the approval of an IDB loan for Argentina"

Ana Baron, Washington-based correspondent for leading "Clarín," comments (09/06) "In spite of the efforts of Argentine Ambassador to the US Jose Octavio Bordon at the US Treasury Department, the US could again abstain from voting in favor of an IDB loan for Argentina.

"It is a 100-million-dollar loan, which is aimed at financing the manufacture of two satellites by Comisión Nacional de Actividades Espaciales (National Committee for Space Activities). The US Treasury Department believes that the IDB should give priority to Latin America's infrastructure projects over these types of projects.

"Argentina believes the project called Pro-Sat is indispensable to monitor water surface, the humidity of the ground, vegetables, and the terrain movement in the country.

"If there is no last-minute change, this would be the second time in a month that the US would vote against granting a credit to Argentina.

"... According to all estimates, the credit would be approved anyway. However, if the US abstains again, as the Argentine Economy Minister fears, it will be a new signal.

"A US financial source told 'Clarín' that the current US Treasury Department's attitude toward Argentina is not as positive as when John Taylor was the US Treasury Assistant Secretary for International Issues. Then, the US Treasury automatically supported Argentina at multinational lending agencies...

"However, after meeting President Kirchner at the Summit of the Americas, (US President) Bush said that, after its successful economic recovery, the country no longer needed US support and that the US believes that judicial security, transparency and the fight against corruption are crucial issues for Argentina to consolidate its economic recovery. What we are witnessing now is a consequence of what Bush said at that time."

- "Argentina's business atmosphere is downgraded"

Leading "Clarín" reports (09/06) "The World Bank believes Argentina's environment will not support the launching of new

businesses in 2007. This is the conclusion of the annual report of the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private sector, which placed Argentina at the 101st position based on the conditions it grants to new commercial entrepreneurs...

"Simeon Djankov, one of the authors of the 2007 Doing Business report, 'the Argentine problem is that it is not implementing enough reforms as fast as other countries are doing so. And if the country's pace does not change, it will continue losing ground.'"

- "A weak government looms without being legitimized by the opposition"

Claudio Mario Aliscioni, columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (09/06) "What should have been a celebration for the Mexican democracy through a presidential change is instead a future loaded with bad omens.

"These are the effects one should expect from a government like that of President-elect Felipe Calderon, who has not been legitimized by the opposition and is suspected to reach power through fraudulent practices.

"... The new president's weakness will also impact on the conflict inside his political party, Acción Nacional. Calderon, who does not

have control of all his party's structures, will have to deal with the most reactionary sector. The agitation of the country will be the best excuse for the enemies within his own political party to condition his agenda."

- "US Democrats - Chavez does not pose a 'threat'"

Leading "Clarín" reports (09/06) "The US Democratic opposition believes that Venezuela has adopted some problematic positions but it does not pose a threat to the US security."

"According to Senator for Illinois Richard Durbin during a lecture on Capitol Hill, 'Chavez does not pose a threat to US national security.'"

"Democrats have submitted a document criticizing the White House's 'shortfalls' and 'incompetence' in directing US national security. The document, called 'Neoconservatives - Bush's Defense record in figures,' which was drafted by the 'Third Way' center of studies, criticizes the US Pentagon's military strategy in Iraq and sustains that the US 'is now less able to fight and win the global war on terrorism.'"

### 13. EDITORIALS

- "Serious increase in drug trafficking"

An editorial in leading "Clarín" reads (09/06) "In the '90s, the international and US organizations dealing with international drug trafficking started to point out that Argentina was no longer a transit country for the drug coming from Northern countries but a place of production and consumption."

"... The increase in drug trafficking poses a serious problem because it is related to the deterioration in the addicts' living conditions and the proliferation of crimes related to the drug business. The drug issue is a double-sided problem that is related to health and security."

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